In this issue...

- Ramblings from Ron by Ronald A. Clarke
- Resource Extraction - A Wetlands Issue by Pierre Mercier
- What's Hot in Housing in Ottawa-Carleton by Allison Christie
- Deconstructing Power by Alana Mullaly
- University of Waterloo Workshop: Climate Change by Barb McMullen
- Sustainable Forestry and Land Use by Jason Killoran
- More Eastern District Awards

- Urban Forum Series and Eastern District Events
- People and Places
- Oktoberfest AGM

The Eastern District of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute invites you to its

Holiday Season Party

Tuesday, December 7, 1999
5:00 pm onwards
at
Vineyards
54 York Street, Ottawa

Toast the end of the millennium with colleages and friends!

Vibrations

Eastern District, Ontario Professional Planners Institute

Région de l'Est de l'Institut des Planificateurs de l'Ontario

Winter 1999
Volume 23, No. 4

Ramblings from Ron

by Ronald A. Clarke

Ramble: "To talk or write in a desultory or long-winded wandering fashion"
(Websters New Collegiate Dictionary)

For those of you who attended the Oktoberfest AGM, you know that I've decided to change the title of the Chair's report. I believe that I'm a better rambler than emanator. Besides, only Dennis Jacobs really knew what an emanation was ... possibly a bad smell or something? As President-Elect of OPPI (Congratulations Dennis!), he certainly will have plenty of opportunity to emanate his way across the province. Sorry, I am rambling, aren't I ...

I look forward to the next two years serving as chair of EOD and representing you on the Eastern District executive and OPPI Council. I am very fortunate to join the likes of Dennis, Marni Cappe, and Grace Strachan to ensure a high concentration of easterners on Council. I also have a strong district executive to keep things humming along. With a new Strategic Plan, there are many important initiatives to pursue at the Provincial level, and we will be leaning on the membership to make headway. I may be calling on you.

The OPPI Annual Conference at Blue Mountain was a blast. For me, the more memorable session was hosted by Paul Bedford, Chief Planner of the new City of Toronto. He spoke candidly of the struggle to create a seamless planning operation following the great amalgamation. He cited many lessons that no doubt will be of use here in the next year or so, and the news wasn't all bad. The conference's evening events were quite memorable too, but for some reason I'm sort of fuzzy on the details...

Speaking of municipal restructuring, the district submitted a brief to the Special Advisor, Mr. Glen Shortliffe. The submission did not promote one model of governance over another. Rather, we provided guidance on the delivery of planning services under whichever model is recommended. Email me at **r.clarke@delcan.com** if you want a copy. Kudos go to Charles Lanktree and others for their time and effort.

Thanks for your support and don't be afraid to ramble back at me.

Vibrations

Vibrations is a quarterly publication of the Eastern Ontario District (EOD) of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI), and is distributed free to all EOD members. Suscriptions are available at $10 per year (4 issues) for non-members.

Vibrations is published quarterly. The following are the deadlines for submission of artlicles.

Issue	Deadline
Spring 2000	15 February, 2000
Summer 2000	15 April, 2000

Opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the EOD, OPPI or the editors.

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Resource Extraction – A Wetlands Issue

by Pierre Mercier, MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning and Economic Development
United Counties of Prescott and Russell

The diesel smoke is belching from the line up of tandem trucks. Heavy industrial loaders, their buckets designed to scoop out several cubic yards of valuable resource, methodically fill the trucks to their fullest capacity. They leave as they came, in a disciplined, orderly fashion, only now they are heavier and noisier.

Its 6 a.m. and the rumble and vibration of the transports jerks you out of bed, cursing the day you sought out a peaceful country setting. Looking out your bedroom window you see the hated trucks kicking out gravel and dust, rumbling by your front gate, soon to return, again and again until the sun goes down. You decide to call the mayor.

A typical rural scenario pitting homeowner against the local gravel pit operation, right? Not quite. This is in fact a wetlands issue. This scene is currently being played out in the United Counties of Prescott and Russell where one of the country's most important wetland complexes is being exploited for a valuable resource, peat.

The Alfred Bog is a 10,000 acre domed peat bog owned in equal parts by public and private interests. More than ten thousand years in the making, the Alfred Bog is a Class 1 wetland and a designated ANSI. This rare landform is home to a large moose herd, more than 50 species of birds, a number of rare plants and insects. The tremendous water retention capacity of organic peat means that the Bog also plays an important role in groundwater dynamics and flood control. Peat is an organic material with the ability to retain water. When mixed with sand and compost it is transformed into a rich growing medium which is in great demand. In the Alfred Bog, this material is easily accessed, extracted and transported to nearby plants where the material is blended, mixed and bagged.

One of the interesting aspects of the peat extraction industry is the surprising lack of regulatory control. When you consider that it is almost identical to sand and gravel operations one wonders why the peat industry is specifically exempted from such provincial statutes as the *Aggregates Resources Act* and the *Mining Act,* and interpretation of the *Topsoil Preservation Act* would lead one to believe that it is not applicable. Peat extraction operations are not required to develop site plans and rehabilitation plans. Notwithstanding the fact that peat cannot be extracted until tremendous amounts of water are removed, there is no need to undertake hydrogeological investigations, nor is a permit to take water required. Truck traffic is not controlled nor is there any requirement to contribute towards repair and maintenance of roads.

Prescott and Russell local zoning by-laws, most of which were adopted in conformity with Official Plans that predate provincial policies on wetlands, do not address peat extraction. Given the lack of provincial controls the peat industry can make a strong case that it is completely legal. Imagine then the challenge faced by the Counties' Planning Department given its mandate to develop a new County Official Plan.

With the exception of the Alfred Bog, the development of planning policies for the protection of wetlands in Prescott and Russell was not a complex undertaking. Most of the UCPR's wetlands are publicly owned, located along the shores of the Ottawa River or have enjoyed historical protection through conservation zoning. In the Alfred Bog case the problem was not so much the need to develop appropriate polices, (the PPS is clear in its approach to wetland protection) but rather it was the need to develop an appropriate consultation process. We wanted to ensure that all stakeholders would understand the probable impacts of new planning policies. The problem was to get the message across without provoking a wave of panic peat extraction activity by operators fearful of eventual planning constraints.

Early in the OP process we met with the extraction industry and explained the intent of the PPS and advised them that we would be reviewing the limits of the wetland. The boundaries would establish the limit of the area to be protected from all development including peat extraction. A similar meeting was held with the environmental representatives. This initial consultation was held some 18 months prior to the OP's adoption.

The results were fairly predictable. Those with financial and business resources were quick to recognize that they were, in a sense, being provided with a deadline.

continued on Page 4

continued from Page 3

They understood that no one could stop them from clearing and draining their lands. As a result a number of areas no longer meet the provincial criteria for significant wetlands. There was a noticeable increase in peat extraction activity during what was a very hot and dry summer. The combination of increased noise, dust, truck traffic and lowered water tables ignited local residents and the environmental lobby. The media took note of the growing controversy. With the added exposure, calls to our department, which also looks after economic development and tourism, increased as everyone, it seemed, wanted to visit the suddenly famous Bog. Needless to say public meetings for the Official Plan were well attended.

On June 22, 1999 Council adopted Prescott and Russell's first Official Plan which protects more than 90% of the original Bog. The Plan excludes active peat extraction areas from the wetland limits. Since then, the two local municipalities have adopted interim control by-laws preventing new extraction operations within the area protected by the County OP. The need for interim control became apparent when a new 40 acre extraction area was uncovered on lands screened from view by 20 metres of brush. The new operation, located near the heart of the Bog on part of a 3200 acre privately owned parcel, raised fears that the very existence of the Alfred Bog was jeopardized.

We are now awaiting the end game. The County Official Plan is but a few weeks away from final approval. One of the two local interim control by-laws was appealed and we fully expect that the wetland policies of the new OP will also be appealed. Personally I am satisfied that we handled a difficult planning issue successfully given the complexity of the issues and the wildly diverging positions of the various stakeholders. I am hopeful that the OMB hearings will result not only in the right decision but also that continued interest will trigger a review of the laws and regulations which apply to the peat extraction industry. I will provide Vibrations with an update as soon as the issue is resolved. Stay tuned.

Urban Forum Series

Shaping Canada's Future by Design

February 9, 2000, 7 p.m.
Champlain Room, Ottawa-Carleton Centre
A discussion of how community qualities can be enhanced through the integration of urban design in all aspects of land development decision-making. (Also in Toronto February 10)

Managing Diversity: Planning for Multicultural Cities

March 21, 2000, 9 a.m. to 12 noon
Haydon Hall, Ottawa-Carleton Centre
A workshop, in partnership with The Metropolis Project, examining international migration and urban planning, and exploring responses toward a desirable multicultural urban environment. (Also in Toronto March 22)

Eastern District Events

Annual Holiday Season Party

December 7, 1999, 5:00 p.m. onwards
Vineyards, 54 York Street in the Byward Market
(see the invitation on the front page of this issue).

People and Places

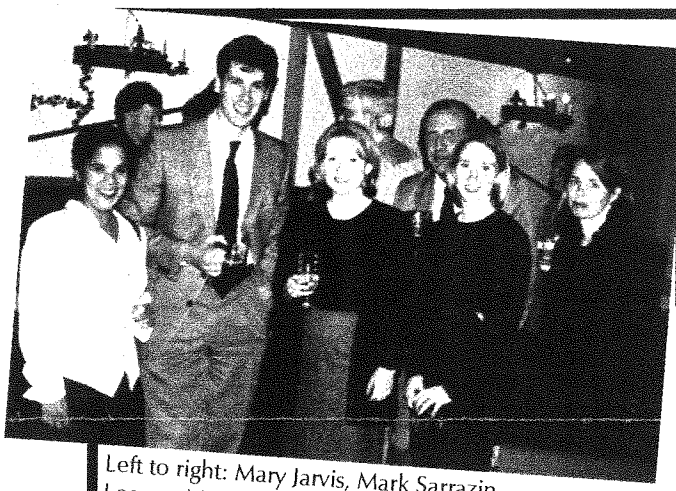
Ann Tremblay has left the City of Gloucester to join the Candian Bar Association in Ottawa as Real Estate Project Manager. Her assignment is a joint project with Federation of Law Societies of Canada.

Karyn Carty Ostafichuk, formerly with the Township of Osgoode, was recently appointed Manager of Planning, Building and Economic Development for the Township of North Grenville. She replaces **R. Carl Cannon,** who was appointed North Grenville's C.A.O.

Allison Christie, previously with Essiambre and Associates, recently began a position as Policy Analyst, Sustainable Development, Natural Resources Canada.

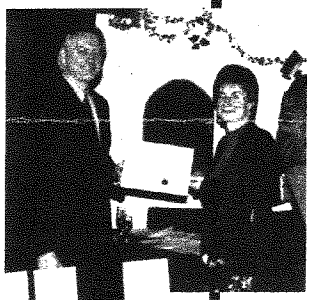
Oktoberfest AGM

The October 28th Oktoberfest and Annual General Meeting, held at the Lindenhof Restaurant, brought out some 40 Eastern District enthusiasts. As is apparent from the photos, a good time was had by all!



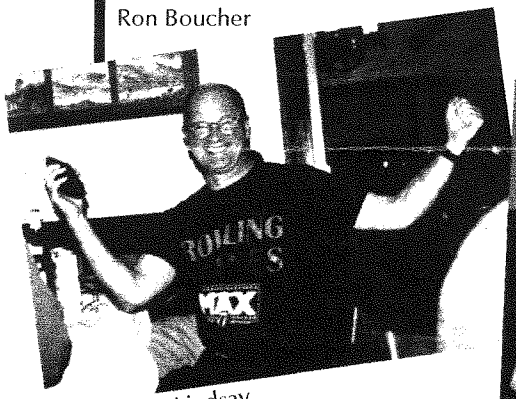
Left to right: Mary Jarvis, Mark Sarrazin, Leeann McGovern, Nigel Brereton, Allison Christie and Alive Fyfe

Dennis Jacobs presents Certificates of Registration to Françoise Jessup (left) and Carol Christiansen (below), a new member.



Grace Strachen and Ron Boucher

Left to right: Amr Ellpithy, Pierre Malo, Phip Dawes and Leeann McGovern



Grant Lindsay

Left to right: Françoise Jessup, Richard Kilstom, Dennis Jacobs, Patrick Déoux, David Sherwood and Ron Clark

Deconstructing Power

Alana Mullaly, Queen's University School of Urban and Regional Planning, Class of 2001

In the two months that I have spent as a planning student at Queen's I have spent much time considering my role as a future planner. Increasingly, my thoughts lend themselves to an analysis of the degree of influence or power that a planner, as a 'shaper' of space, possesses. I identify a planner's influence in terms of the many ways in which people experience the space that surrounds them, or that which the planner has a hand in creating. By extension I would suggest that one's experience of space shapes his or her perceptions of 'place'. This is to say that access to and use of space, for example, determines in large part, the ways in which we perceive our built environment. The planner thus plays an instrumental role in shaping our perceptions of our communities.

Without a doubt, the concept of 'space' is quite powerful in terms of the way in which I think about planning as a practice. To me, the fact that space is continually claimed and contested by multiple parties illustrates the highly political nature of space. Thus, the suggestion that a planner is somehow a benign or neutral character in the construction of 'space' and 'place', is highly suspect. Rather, as a planner I shall have to recognize the many ways that my planning decisions can simultaneously facilitate and limit a positive experience of space for users. In this vein it is clear that one of my primary responsibilities as a future planner is to be accountable to those for whom I am 'shaping' space. To this end I am speaking of the necessity for broad based community participation in planning processes. It is clear to me however, that this project of inclusivity involves moving beyond the rhetoric of 'community participation' that appears in most contemporary analyses of planning processes. Intrinsic to this task will be the acknowledgement and negotiation of my own power as a planner.

The negotiation of power is something that we see played out everyday – in our workplaces, our classrooms and in our personal relationships. Generally we are able to identify our position as either more or less powerful in relation to others in each of the above circumstances. Without a doubt, the power dynamics inherent in such circumstances shape in large part, our daily experiences. As a planner, and thereby assuming a degree of power given my status as a 'professional', I will have the opportunity to make many choices. Specifically I will make choices that pertain to the ways in which I will employ my power. Invariably these choices will affect not only my own experiences, but also the experiences of others. I suspect that I am not alone in this realization and in turn, in the larger project of utilizing my power to effect social change. Idealistic? Why not?

More Eastern District Awards

In the Fall '99 issue of Vibrations we promised "more to come" about two other Eastern District Professional Merit Award recipients at the September '99 OPPI Conference, in addition to Delcan Corporation for their Cornwall Visioning Report. Congratulations to both, and here they are—

The Region of Ottawa-Carleton and Nortel Networks were the recipients of a Professional Merit Award for their Travel Demand Management Study, in the New Directions Category. The Conference agenda indicated: "As part of its expansion program at the Carling Avenue site, Nortel instituted a GreenCommute Strategic Plan. It was launched in March of 1999. The Plan involves underground parking for car poolers, restricted above ground parking, expanded telecommuting opportunities, improved transit services and shower and locker facilities for cyclists, roller bladers, walkers and runners. To encourage employees to participate Nortel offered free transit passes and hockey tickets to commuters and a transit hub and ticket kiosk are connected to the campus's tunnel system." Nortel is looking into implementing similar programs at its other research establishments. The jury called the project "an interesting combination of planning and marketing, providing for an extremely successful program."

Delcan Corporation received an additional Professional Merit Award for their Environmental Assessment Report for the Nortel Ottawa Expansion: Carling Campus, Nepean, in the Planning Studies Category. The Conference agenda stated: "Nortel's Carling Avenue campus was the scene of an almost 100,000 square metre expansion which included not only Nortel property but also Greenbelt lands leased from the NCC. An amendment to the 1988 Master Plan

continued on Page 7

continued from Page 6

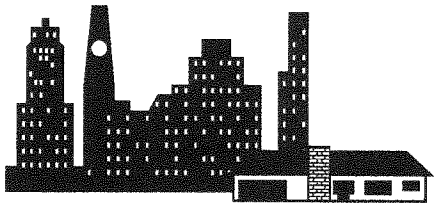
which had previously governed the use of the land and an environmental assessment report were required. Delcan, in partnership with Nortel, carried out studies on transportation, noise, vibrations, air quality, stormwater management, solid waste management, snow management, archaelogic resources, natural heritage features and geotechnical conditions. Recommendations were brought forward. The jury praised the plan for its 'comprehensiveness' and strong use of graphics.

What's Hot in Housing in Ottawa-Carleton

by Allison Christie, OPPI Representative, Urban Forum Steering Committee

The first lecture of the 1999-2000 Urban Forum series, held October 13, 1999 began with a timely topic, "Housing Trends in the Capital". The lecture was sponsored by the Region of Ottawa-Carleton, the Ottawa Regional Society of Architects, and Katz Webster Clancy Associates Architects. Moderated by Ralph Wiesbrock, the panel discussion featured Alain Miguelez of CHMC, Peter Gabor of Gabor & Popper Architects, and Steve Pomeroy of Focus Consulting.

Alain Miguelez provided an overview of housing trends and statistics in the Ottawa-Hull metropolitan area. Average household size is getting smaller, reflecting choices to have fewer children, and a trend towards smaller households associated with "Generation X" (25-29 and 30-34 age group). According to CMHC, however, Ottawa's new home construction is not capturing the demographic market, as demonstrated by CMHC's Potential Housing Demand model (PHD). There has been, and continues to be very little rental construction, and what is being constructed is high end. There is a strong emphasis on the "move-up market"; and there are fewer, more expensive townhouses. Distinct housing markets have generated distinct stereotypes in advertising and marketing, such as the new family, the young urbanite, and empty-nesters. Ottawa's unique housing market's quirks and local variables also influence the location of new housing in this region.



Peter Gabor is a Toronto architect whose work in New Urbanism has taken him to such places as Chile, Cuba and Russia to share his expertise. New Urbanism repackages the principles of good urban development into a way people can understand, as an antidote to conventional suburban development. New Urbanism continues to be a trend that influences housing markets throughout Canada.

New Urbanist communities tend to outsell their competitors—and they sell for more. Developers have to be committed to the quality and design elements in order to make a neo-traditional project work. New Urbanism also embraces participatory planning with multiple stakeholders. Markham, Ontario is one of the most progressive communities in terms of understanding new urbanism and alternative development standards. Gabor admits that Markham is not quite perfect, but he feels the municipality is way ahead of others. The design of a home and its community is becoming very important in order to sell homes in Toronto.

The Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing asked **Steve Pomeroy** to look at the economic viability of Single Room Occupancy units (SROs) in Ontario. Several new SRO developments have been undertaken in recent years in the US, largely in California. SROs are less costly than a conventional apartment, resembling a university residence, and comprise a building with single units with a small bedroom, an individual or shared bathroom, shared common space, and a secure front desk. The US experience has identified two niches: low wage working singles, and traditional chronic homeless and at-risk population. One of the most significant challenges is how to make SROs efficient.

The lowest rent of an SRO is $325. "Welfare rent" is not enough to attract investors to develop or fund an SRO development. Providing land at concessionary values enhances the returns; a non-profit might be able to make it work. Regulatory issues are also important, as SROs are not conventional in terms of the Ontario Building Code and zoning. Pomeroy concluded that SROs won't address homelessness, but they could contribute to the affordable housing stock in the province.

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO WORKSHOP:

CLIMATE CHANGE

by Barb McMullen, Publications Representative

Louise Comeau's presentation on October 22, 1999 at the Univ. of Waterloo's School of Urban and Regional Planning Ottawa workshop addressed Canada's response to global climate change. Comeau, who is Senior Policy Analyst on Environmental Issues and Manager for Sustainable Communities at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), discussed institutionalised community energy planning as a means to address Canada's problems associated with climate change. The implications of global warming for Canada include a minimum increase of 5-8 degrees in average temperature (with higher increases associated with winter and greater altitude), compared with an average increase of 1-3 degrees globally. In comparison with other countries, Canada faces a long term process and a significant challenge to reduce greenhouse gases, since it is energy intensive and relies heavily on fossil fuels.

Comeau stressed that energy policy is a critical instrument in achieving significant greenhouse gas reductions in Canada—particularly strategies achieving multiple benefits associated with energy reduction. Canadian municipalities are addressing the notions of quality of life and sustainable communities as the real issues, having formulated a multi-faceted Quality of Life Infrastructure Program, recently submitted to the Finance Minister by the FCM as a federal budget submission. If implemented as FCM-proposed, the program would invest in environmental, transportation and social infrastructure, with the objective of improved quality of life, increased environmental and health protection, reduced homelessness, and improved community well-being. The FCM municipal environmental investment package proposes funding for energy-efficient municipal and community building retrofits, with benefits of improved indoor and outdoor air quality through reduced combustion of fossil fuels, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

While noting that Canada is not yet "green on climate change", Louise Comeau was optimistic concerning the prospects for openness , as well as potential agreement on necessary policy shifts to achieve Canada's goal to reduce greenhouse gas by 6% by the year 2012.

Sustainable Forestry and Land Use

Eastern Ontario Model Forest

This is an open invitation to all members of the OPPI to get involved by commenting on the Eastern Ontario Model Forest's Sustainable Forestry and Land Use project. South Nation Conservation is currently working with the Eastern Ontario Model Forest (EOMF) in developing a manual of existing forest-friendly planning policies and regulations. This manual will encourage municipalities to implement these policies and regulations into their own planning documents.

Municipalities within Eastern Ontario do not generally look at forestry as a land use planning issue, nor do they have sufficient forestry policies or regulations in place. However, in contrast, agriculture and open spaces are planned designations and the right to farm is a recognized policy in much of rural Ontario. The opportunity now exists for the EOMF to help promote sustainable forestry and its economic importance in these municipalities. Recent changes to legislation introduced new tools under the Planning Act and Municipal Act that will allow sustainable forestry to be achieved. Working within these Acts and supporting the development of Official Plans that respond to forest resource management values, is one key way that the EOMF can advocate the conservation of existing forest resources and in setting realistic, achievable targets for woodland cover in Eastern Ontario.

The information and ideas that hope to be gathered from this invitation are as follows:

- Current sustainable forestry policies and regulations that may be in place outside of the Eastern Ontario.
- Generic zoning by-laws and forestry management practices that municipalities can implement.
- Tools municipalities can use to determine the economic value of their forests.

All comments and ideas are to be directed to:
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